

What is Claim d is:

1. A registration device for a mailing system comprising:

a first biasing means to apply a biasing force to an article to register the article against a registration plate during printing by a first print head;

actuator means coupled to the first biasing means, the actuator means controlling a position of the first biasing means to selectively apply and remove the biasing force.

2. The registration device of claim 1, wherein the first biasing means is a ski.

3. The registration device of claim 2, wherein the ski is formed of a flexible material.

4. The registration device of claim 1, wherein the actuator means is a rotary actuator that when rotated controls the position of the first biasing means.

5. The registration device of claim 4, wherein the rotary actuator includes a shaft of a motor.

6. The registration device of claim 1, wherein the biasing force is applied to the article by the first biasing means only when the article is being imprinted upon by the first print head.

7. The registration device of claim 1, further comprising:

a second biasing means coupled to the actuator means, the second biasing means applying a biasing force to the article to register the article against a registration plate during printing by a second print head,

wherein a position of the actuator means determines which one of the first and second biasing means will apply the biasing force.

8. The registration device of claim 7, wherein the biasing means has a first position in which the first biasing means applies the biasing force and the second biasing means does not apply the biasing force, and a second position in which the first biasing means does not apply the biasing force and the second biasing means applies the biasing force.

9. The registration device of claim 8, wherein the biasing means has a third position in which both the first and second biasing means do not apply the biasing force.

10. A mailing system comprising:

a transport device to transport an article through a feed path of the mailing system;

a first print module located along the feed path;

a second print module located along the feed path downstream from the first print module, only one the first and second print modules being active at a time ; and

a registration device to register an article against a registration plate beneath the active one of the first and second print modules, the registration device including:

a first biasing means to apply a biasing force to the article to register the article against the registration plate during printing by the first print module;

a second biasing means to apply a biasing force to the article to register the article against the registration plate during printing by the second print module;
and

an actuator device coupled to the first biasing means and the second biasing means, the actuator device controlling a position of the first and second biasing means to selectively apply and remove the biasing force.

11. The mailing system of claim 10, wherein the first and second biasing means are skis.
12. The mailing system of claim 11, wherein the skis are formed of a flexible material.
13. The mailing system of claim 10, wherein the actuator device is a rotary actuator that when rotated controls the position of the first and second biasing means.
14. The mailing system of claim 13, wherein the rotary actuator includes a shaft of a motor.
15. The mailing system of claim 10, wherein when the first print module is active, the biasing force is applied to the article by the first biasing means only when the article is being imprinted upon by the first print module.
16. The mailing system of claim 10, wherein when the second print module is active, the biasing force is applied to the article by the second biasing means only when the article is being imprinted upon by the second print module.
17. A mailing system for processing mail pieces including printing on an upper surface of a mail piece passing through the mailing system, the mailing system comprising:
 - a first printing device including a first print head having a plurality of nozzles disposed in a predetermined plane to deposit ink on the upper surface of a mail piece;
 - a registration plate arranged to register the upper surface of a mail piece at a predetermined distance beneath the plurality of nozzles of the first print head;
 - a transport device to transport a mail piece under the plurality of nozzles;

a first ski to apply a biasing force to a lower surface of the mail piece to register the upper surface of the mail piece against the registration plate beneath the first printing device; and

an actuator device coupled to the first ski, the actuator device controlling a position of the first ski to selectively apply the biasing force when the first printing device is printing on the mail piece and to remove the biasing force when the printing has been completed by the first printing device.

18. The mailing system of claim 17, wherein the actuator device includes a motor having a shaft, the shaft being coupled to the first ski by a linking mechanism,

wherein rotation of the shaft by the motor in a first direction causes the first ski to move into a first position to apply the biasing force, and rotation of the shaft by the motor in a second direction opposite the first direction causes the first ski to move into a second position to remove the biasing force.

19. The mailing system of claim 17, further comprising:

a second printing device including a second print head having a plurality of nozzles disposed in a predetermined plane to deposit ink on the upper surface of a mail piece, the registration plate additionally arranged to register the upper surface of a mail piece at a predetermined distance beneath the plurality of nozzles of the second print head; and

a second ski to apply a biasing force to a lower surface of the mail piece to register the upper surface of the mail piece against the registration plate beneath the second printing device, the second ski being coupled to the actuator device,

wherein only one of the first and second printing device is active at a time, and the actuator device controls a position of the first and second ski to selectively apply the biasing force only beneath the active print device when the active print device is printing.

20. The mailing system of claim 17, further comprising:

a sensor to detect when a trailing edge of the mail piece is passing the first printing device,

wherein the actuator device in response to the trailing edge being detected positions the first ski to apply the biasing force for a next mail piece.

21. In a mailing machine having a first and second print module, a method for registering a surface of a mail piece against a registration plate comprising:

selecting one of the first print module and second print module as an active print module and the other as an inactive print module;

moving a first ski to a first position, the first ski when in the first position applying a biasing force to the mail piece to register a top surface of the mail piece against the registration plate as the mail piece passes beneath the active print module; and

moving a second ski to a second position, the second ski when in the second position not applying the biasing force to the mail piece as the mail piece passes beneath the inactive print module such that the top surface of the mail piece is not registered against the registration plate.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein moving a first ski and moving a second ski further comprise:

rotating a shaft of a motor in a first direction,

wherein rotation of the shaft of the motor in the first direction causes the first ski to move into the first position to apply the biasing force and the second ski to move into the second position to not apply the biasing force.

23. The method of claim 22, further comprising:

changing the active module to the inactive module and the inactive module to the active module; and

rotating the shaft of the motor in a second direction opposite the first direction,

wherein rotation of the shaft of the motor in the second direction causes the first ski to move into the second position to not apply the biasing force and the second ski to move into the first position to apply the biasing force.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein moving the first ski further comprises:

moving the first ski to the first position only when the active print module is printing on the mail piece; and

moving the first ski and the second ski to a third position when the active print module has completed printing on the mail piece, the first and second skis when in the third position not applying a biasing force to the mail piece.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the third position is located between the first and second positions.

26. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

detecting a trailing edge of the mail piece; and

moving the first ski back to the first position in response to detection of the trailing edge of the mail piece.